

## Governor Dayton, Commissioner Cassellius Lay out Vision for Education Reform

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Reaffirming his commitment to make education a top priority of his administration, Governor Mark Dayton, along with Commissioner of Education Brenda Cassellius, laid out his vision for comprehensive education reform in Minnesota. *Better Schools for a Better Minnesota* lays out a seven-point plan for education reform designed to help every Minnesota student succeed. Governor Dayton says that he will keep his campaign promise to increase funding for education. The plan will also focus on closing achievement gaps by focusing on earliest learners.

Governor Dayton said about the plan: "Education was key to our State's past prosperity, and it will be key to our future prosperity. An excellent public education system will be the driving force behind job creation in Minnesota. We must prepare today's students for the jobs and the industries of the future, and thus we must make important innovations in our public school system. With this plan, we will take what is good with Minnesota's K-12 education and make it even better, to ensure every student full opportunity to succeed in this ever more competitive global economy."

The top three priorities of the plan are to improve state education funding, to focus more resources and raise the profile of Early Childhood Education and to narrow achievement gaps in our system. Other components of the plan are to improve literacy statewide, offer support for high quality teaching, and create better testing to improve student learning.

Minnesota Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius, Ed.D., said work is already underway to change the conversation about education in Minnesota. She has begun a reorganization of the Minnesota Department of Education to offer better support for teachers, superintendents, and districts that will move the agency from a top-down compliance driven model to one that offers support, transparency and high standards of accountability.

"The most important thing we can do as leaders is to set high expectations for ourselves and create a shared vision that inspires others to do the same," said Commissioner Cassellius. "I believe it's our shared responsibility as leaders and as stakeholders to support our teachers, principals and superintendents as they work to achieve the highest standards of excellence for all children."